

List of claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An isolated ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid encoding a hek-L protein capable of binding hek, wherein said ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 80% identical to a sequence selected from the group consisting of nucleotides 83-796, 83-745, 140-796, and 140-745 of SEQ ID NO:1.

Claim 3 (currently amended): An isolated ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid encoding a hek-L protein capable of binding hek, wherein said ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 80% identical to a sequence selected from the group consisting of nucleotides 28-630, 28-573, 94-630, and 94-573 of SEQ ID NO:3.

Claim 5 (currently amended): An isolated ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid encoding a human hek-L protein capable of binding hek, wherein said hek-L comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 80% identical to a sequence selected from the group consisting of amino acids 1-202 and 1-219 of SEQ ID NO:2 and amino acids 1-160 and 1-179 of SEQ ID NO:4.

Claim 7 (currently amended): An isolated ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid encoding a fusion protein comprising a hek-L polypeptide that binds hek, and an Fc polypeptide, wherein said hek-L comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 80% identical to a sequence selected from the group consisting of amino acids 1-202 of SEQ ID NO:2 and amino acids 1-160 of SEQ ID NO:4.

Claim 8 (currently amended): An expression vector comprising a ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid according to claim 1.

Claim 9 (currently amended): An expression vector comprising a ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid according to claim 3.

Claim 10 (currently amended): An expression vector comprising a ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid according to claim 5.

Claim 11 (currently amended): An expression vector comprising a ~~DNA~~ nucleic acid according to claim 7.

Claim 12 (original): A process for preparing a hek-L polypeptide, comprising culturing a host cell transformed with a vector according to claim 8 under conditions promoting expression of hek-L, and recovering the hek-L polypeptide from the culture.

Claim 13 (original): A process for preparing a hek-L polypeptide, comprising culturing a host cell transformed with a vector according to claim 9 under conditions promoting expression of hek-L, and recovering the hek-L polypeptide from the culture.

Claim 14 (original): A process for preparing a hek-L polypeptide, comprising culturing a host cell transformed with a vector according to claim 10 under conditions promoting expression of hek-L, and recovering the hek-L polypeptide from the culture.

Claim 15 (original): A process for preparing a hek-L polypeptide, comprising culturing a host cell transformed with a vector according to claim 11 under conditions promoting expression of hek-L, and recovering the hek-L polypeptide from the culture.

Claims 28-39 (withdrawn)